

*SHEPHERD SCHOOL
CHAMBER ORCHESTRA*

LARRY RACHLEFF, conductor

JONAH SIROTA, viola

Sunday, February 9, 1997

8:00 p.m.

Stude Concert Hall

RICE UNIVERSITY

the
Shepherd
School
of Music

PROGRAM

Concerto for Viola and Orchestra

Krzysztof Penderecki

Lento - Prologue

(b. 1933)

Vivace

Intermezzo

Vivo

Lento - Epilogue

Jonah Sirota, soloist

INTERMISSION

Serenade No. 1 in D Major, Op. 11

Johannes Brahms

Allegro molto

(1833-1897)

Adagio non troppo

Menuetto

Scherzo. Allegro

Rondo. Allegro

In consideration of the performers and members of the audience, please check audible paging devices with the ushers and silence audible timepieces. The taking of photographs and use of recording equipment are prohibited.

SHEPHERD¹ SCHOOL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Violin I

Jana Vander Schaaf,
concertmaster
Colleen Jennings
Marie-André Chevrette
Lise Nadon
Larisa Struble
Samuel Thompson
Rita Lammers
Melinda Graves
Zhang Zhang

Violin II

David Brubaker,
principal
Cory Balzer
Caroline Pliszka
David Fuller
Abigail Karr
Malgorzata Leska

Viola

Ellen Craig,
principal
Chloë Kline
Matthew Dane
Alice Rosen
Jonathan Brown

Cello

Alison Bazala,
principal
Heath Marlow

Cello (cont.)

Nisse Nøstbakken
Rebecca Carrington
Clement Chow

Double Bass

Alain Malo, principal
Donald Howey
Maxime Bibeau

Flute

Julie Duncan
Elana Hoffman

Piccolo

Julie Duncan

Oboe

Kelly Newport
Jason Sudduth

Clarinet

Juliet Lai
Rochelle Oddo
Xin-Yang Zhou

Bassoon

Shawn Jones
Damian Montaña

Contrabassoon

Damian Montaña

Horn

Wade Butin
Elizabeth Matchett
Jeffrey Rogers
Shane Smith
Martina Snell

Trumpet

Jens Larsen
Brian Seitz
Peter Wiseman

Trombone

Sean Reed
Steven Wills

Celeste

Jason Bednarz

Timpani and Percussion

John Andress
Meredith Nelson
Trent Petrunia
Lucas Scanlon
Douglas Smith
Che-ming Tsai

Orchestra Manager

Martin Merritt

Orchestra Librarian

Lisa Vosdoganes

WINDS, BRASS, AND PERCUSSION LISTED ALPHABETICALLY.

STRING SEATING CHANGES WITH EACH CONCERT.

PROGRAM NOTES

Concerto for Viola and Orchestra Krzysztof Penderecki

The Concerto for Viola and Orchestra by the Polish composer Krzysztof Penderecki was written in 1983 and premiered in Maracaibo, Venezuela, at the celebrations for the 200th anniversary of the birth of Simon de Bolivar. The first European performance was conducted by Penderecki in Leningrad, and thereafter he wrote a new version for chamber orchestra consisting of only strings and percussion (without winds and brass), which was premiered in Moscow in 1985.

The Concerto for Viola and Orchestra marked the end of Penderecki's "romantic phase," in which he had been extensively involved in the expressive chromaticism and late romantic ideals of Post-Wagnerian music. Although some of these sonorities became integrated into his style, he began to develop new approaches to chromaticism and tonality in later works such as the *Concerto for Viola and Orchestra*.

The concerto consists of a single movement in a clear symmetrical form. It begins with a Lento-Prologue and ends with a corresponding slow Epilogue. In between there are two pairs of contrasting sections, Lento-Vivace and Lento-Vivo, that are connected by an Intermezzo with scherzando episodes. The viola begins the work alone in an expressive, recitative style, playing an interval particularly associated with Penderecki, the falling minor second. The music is written in free style until the end of the introduction, but as the Prologue finishes and the main movement begins, the percussion gains importance and the texture of the strings becomes very dense. The cantabile style of the opening gives way to increasing virtuosity as the Vivace section begins; sixteenth notes predominate in the solo part, the meter of the music changes frequently, the strings play aggressively at the frog, and there is much use of the xylophone. The following section, the Intermezzo, features trills, tremolos and spiccato playing in the viola, accompanied by tam-tam, bells, triangle, timpani, cymbals, and solo strings in a scherzando manner. Cadenzas in the viola are used to lead back to the second Lento section and into the following Vivo section, which contains several references to the previous Vivace section. After a brief reminder of music from the Intermezzo section, the Lento-Epilogue begins, building up from the low strings with the descending minor second interval of the opening. The expressive playing of the soloist continues until the end, when the other strings, bells, and tam-tam merge atmospherically with the viola very softly, on the note "D."

Serenade No. 1 in D Major, Op. 11 Johannes Brahms

The attention of the musical world was captured by the glowing description of the young Johannes Brahms given in Robert Schumann's famous article, "New Roads," in October 1853: "If he aims his magic wand where the massed powers of chorus and orchestra lend him their forces, then we are in store for even more awe-inspiring glimpses into the secrets of the world of

spirits." For the twenty-year-old Brahms, however, the confidence underlying this bold public statement from such an esteemed musical figure compounded the pressure he already felt as a young composer living in the shadow of Beethoven. It is clear that Brahms felt the continuation of the great German symphonic tradition to be a heavy responsibility; the first two orchestral works to be published by Brahms were in fact the two **Serenades, Op. 11 in D and Op. 16 in A**, and it was not until 1876 that his first symphony was completed.

Three seasons as Music Director at the court of Detmold from 1855 to 1859 had exposed Brahms to orchestral players of considerable ability, while the daily musical activities of the court had ensured that nearly the entire repertoire of classical chamber music was performed during his time there. The Serenades of Haydn and Mozart were prominently featured in the concerts, and it was no doubt from exposure to these classical models that Brahms found the inspiration for his own two works.

Originally intended for outdoor evening entertainment, eighteenth-century Serenades were usually scored for wind instruments, which were suited to outdoor settings because of their penetrating sound. Following the pattern of this classical genre, the first version of Brahms' **Serenade in D Major** was scored for eight single instruments, but in 1858, Brahms began to rework his composition with a more orchestral sound in mind. During the time that Brahms was reworking the piece, he happened to meet the concertmaster of the Detmold Orchestra, Carl Bargheer, and told him: "I am revising the serenade for orchestra so that it will make a better impression." When Bargheer commented that the work would then become a symphony, Brahms replied, "By God, symphonies, if one even dares to write them after Beethoven, will have to look completely different!"

The work was premiered in a version for small ensemble in Hamburg in 1859, with Brahms conducting. He gave the following account of the performance in a letter to Clara Schumann: "Yesterday the serenade was performed before nearly 1200 people, and you were not there to enjoy it ... It did not go too well, unfortunately, for the winds were weak, especially the horn and the flute, the latter being positively bad." Brahms continued to develop and refine the orchestration of the work, and the final version that was premiered in Hannover in 1860 consisted of pairs of flutes, oboes, clarinets, and bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings.

The first movement pays homage to the finale of Haydn's **Symphony No. 104** in both the shape of the main theme and the open fifth drone in the horns. This is followed by a lyrical slow movement, scored in a chamber fashion, that foreshadows many aspects of Brahms' mature writing. The last three movements are relatively simple in style; a pair of gracious Minuets opens with a duet between the clarinet and the bassoon; the Scherzo is notable for its contrapuntal writing; and the Serenade ends with an exuberant Rondo. This work contains aspects of both the chamber music style of the traditional Serenade and new symphonic traits of Brahms' orchestral writing, marking an important turning point in his development as a symphonic composer.

— Notes by Barbara Downie

BIOGRAPHY

Viola soloist JONAH SIROTA is currently an undergraduate student at The Shepherd School of Music studying with Martha Katz. Past teachers include Wayne Brooks, Roberto Diaz, Victoria Chiang, and Heidi Castleman.

The winner of the Wendell C. Irish viola award and the Juilliard Pre-College Concerto Competition, Mr. Sirota gave his solo debut at Lincoln Center at the age of eighteen, playing the Handel/Casadesus Viola Concerto with the Juilliard Pre-College Symphony.

Mr. Sirota is the violist of the Chiara String Quartet, the only quartet invited to attend the prestigious Center for Advanced Quartet Studies at the Aspen Music Festival last summer. With that group he has coached with some of the world's finest chamber musicians, including members of the Vermeer, Guarneri, Emerson, Cavani, and Concord String Quartets.

A proponent of new music, Mr. Sirota is a coordinator of Bread and Circuses, the student new music ensemble of the Shepherd School. He has premiered several new works for viola, including a viola sonata, **Park Dances**, by his father, composer Robert Sirota. This work was orchestrated into a concerto, which Jonah Sirota premiered with the State Philharmonic of Oraden, Romania.

An active performer in the Houston area, Mr. Sirota is currently Principal Viola of the Woodlands Symphony Orchestra, and also appears regularly on The Channing Concerts chamber music series. Mr. Sirota performs this evening as a winner of the 1996 Shepherd School Concerto Competition.

UPCOMING ORCHESTRA CONCERTS

March 20, 22, 24, and 26, 7:30 p.m. - SHEPHERD SCHOOL OPERA and the SHEPHERD SCHOOL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA present Mozart's *Così fan tutte* (Peter Webster, guest director; Richard Bado, guest conductor).

Wortham Opera Theatre at Alice Pratt Brown Hall.

Admission (general seating): \$10/\$8. For advance tickets, call 527-4933.

Friday, March 21, 8:00 p.m. - SHEPHERD SCHOOL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Larry Rachleff, conductor PROGRAM: Revueltas *Sensemaya*; Brahms *Symphony No. 3 in F Major*; and Samuel Jones *Symphony No. 3, "Palo Duro Canyon."*

Stude Concert Hall. Free Admission.



RICE